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## My First Day of VPK Comes to Marion County

**MARION COUNTY, Fla.** – It is back-to-school time which means thousands of the state’s youngest students will be starting Florida’s Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) education program, a state-funded education program.

To celebrate the start of a new year of VPK, the Early Learning Coalition of Marion County is joining Florida’s Office of Early Learning as they launch “My First Day of VPK”, a statewide social media campaign to welcome children into the program and help parents mark this important milestone in their child’s life. VPK programs start on August 10<sup>th</sup> in Marion County so the campaign will run through the beginning of September. Parents can visit [www.floridaearlylearning.com/vpk/mu\\_first\\_day\\_of\\_vpk.aspx](http://www.floridaearlylearning.com/vpk/mu_first_day_of_vpk.aspx) to download and print a special flyer for their children to hold for commemorative photos. Then, they can use #1stDayVPK to post the photos on social media. The Office of Early Learning will be sharing #1stDayVPK-tagged content on its Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts through early September. As well as the printable flyer, the web page has tips for parents and children as they prepare for the first day of VPK.

More than 165,000 4-year-old children attended a VPK program in Florida last year including over 2,100 in Marion County.

VPK is free for children who reside in Florida and will be 4 years old by September 1<sup>st</sup> of the year they enroll. Parents whose children were born between February 2 and September 1 of the calendar year may postpone enrolling their 4-year-old until the following year when their child is 5.

For more information on the VPK program, including child registration, visit [www.elc-marion.org](http://www.elc-marion.org).

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